

Message Text

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46

ACTION AF-06

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, BC

SUBJECT: BNF RALLIES CONTINUE CRITICISM OF BDP

REF: A) GABORONE 1429; B) GABORONE 1055; C) GABORONE 452

1. NOVEMBER 21 EDITION OF GOVERNMENT-PUBLISHED BOTSWANA DAILY NEWS CARRIES STORY ON RECENT RALLIES OF BOLSWANA NATIONAL FRONT (BNF) DURING WHICH NEW CRITICISMS WERE LEVELED AT GOVERNMENT AND KHAMZ'S RULING BOTSWANA DEMOCRITIC PARTY (BDP). BNF RALLIES IN SELEBI-PIKWE AND MMADINARE CRITICIZED PRESIDENT KHAMA'S ALLEGED PLANS TO CALL A "SURPRISE" GENERAL ELECTION IN OCTOBER 1976. BNF SPOKESMEN AT THE RALLIES CLAIMED THAT BDP WILL HOLD THE ELECTIONS IN ORDER "TO DENY OPPOSITION PARTIES TIME TO ORGANIZE THEMSELVES AND CAMPAIGN". ACCORDING TO THE DAILY NEWS, ALLEGED BDP MISUSE OF THE MEDIA (RADIO BOTSWANA AND THE DAILY NEWS) FOR THE BDP'S OWN POLITICAL ENDS AND THE ALLEGED LACK OF SECURITY OF BOTSWANA'S BORDERS WERE ALSO THE SUBJECTS OF CRITICISM DURING THE MEETINGS.

2. OTHER BNF ALLEGATIONS, WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN LEVELLED AT THE BDP, WERE TROTTED OUT AT THE RALLIES. ONE CHARGE WAS THAT EXPATRIATES EMPLOYED BY THE GOB HAVE BEEN GUILTY OF THEFT

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FROM THE PUBLIC TILL. ANOTHER FAVORITE OPPOSITION TOPIC WHICH WAS

DISCUSSED IS THE ARRANGEMENT WHEREBY TIA BDP LEASES ITS PARTY HEADQUARTERS, TSHOLDTSA HOUSE, TO THE GOVERNMENT FOR WHAT THE BNF CONSIDERS AN EXORBITANT RENTAL.

3. COMMENT: THE BNF IS PROBABLY GEARING UP FOR THE NEXT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT WHICH BEGNS NOVEMBER 24. ALTHOUGH PHILIP MATANTE OF THE BOTSWANA PEOPLE'S PARTY AND M. K. MPHO OF THE BOTSWANA INDEPENDENCE PARTY ARE USUALLY MORE OUTSPOKEN IN PARLIAMENT THAN THE BNF'S BATHOEN GASEITSIWE, THE BNF HAS BEEN THE MOST ACTIVE OF THE OPPOSITION PARTIES, HAVING HELD A NUMBER OF RALLIES OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS (REFTELS A AND B).
POPE

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